

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 00553 130832Z
ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6610

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 0553

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, UR, US
SUBJECT: SOVIET HARASSMENT

1. EMBASSY SECOND SECRETARY RAYMOND SMITH WAS SUBJECTED TO HARASSING FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY JAN 11 WHILE ESCORTING FOUR SOVIET GUESTS INTO HIS APARTMENT BUILDING. THREE SOVIET MILITIA STOPPED HIS GUESTS, ONE OF WHOM (NAUM MEIMAN) IS MEMBER OF HELSINKI MONITORING GROUP, AND ASKED FOR THEIR DOCUMENTATION. PHOTOGRAPHY WAS REPEATED WHEN SMITH ESCORTED GUESTS BACK OUT OF BUILDING MORE THAN THREE HOURS LATER.

2. SINCE ARRANGEMENTS HAD BEEN DISCUSSED ON TELEPHONE, EMBASSY ASSUMES KGB TOOK ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITY WHICH PRESENTED ITSELF. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE (77 MOSCOW 16855 AND 77 MOSCOW 13409), KGB HAS USED "PHOTO HARASSMENT" TECHNIQUE AGAINST US IN LENINGRAD AS WELL AS MOSCOW. WE BELIEVE EMBASSY SHOULD PROTEST THIS INTERFERENCE WITH NORMAL SOCIAL CONTACTS, IN ORDER TO MAKE CLEAR TO SOVIET SIDE THAT WE REGARD THIS SORT OF HARASSMENT AS UNACCEPTABLE INTERFERENCE WITH NORMAL DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY. FAILURE TO DO SO COULD BE TAKEN BY SOVIET SIDE AS TACIT ACQUIESCENCE BY US THAT EMBASSY OFFICERS TARGETED FOR SUCH HARASSMENT WERE IN FACT ENGAGED IN IMPROPER ACTIVITIES. AT THE LEAST, OUR CONTINUED SILENCE ABOUT THIS SORT OF HARASSMENT COULD
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MAKE IT EASIER FOR KGB TO CONTINUE OR EVEN INTENSIFY IT.

3. TEXT OF PROPOSED NOTE TO MFA FOLLOWS. WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S CONCURRENCE OR REVISIONS.
BEGIN TEXT: THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA WASHES TO DRAW THE ATTENTION OF THE MINISTRY

OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS TO AN INCIDENT ON JANUARY 11 IN WHICH EMBASSY SECOND SECRETARY RAYMOND F. SMITH WAS SUBJECTED TO BLATANT AND DELIBERATE HARASSMENT.

AT ABOUT 8:00 PM ON JANUARY 11, MR. SMITH MET FOUR SOVIET ACQUAINTANCES NEAR HIS HOME AT LENINSKY PROSPECT 83, CORPUS 5 IN ORDER TO ESCORT THEM INTO THE BUILDING FOR A DINNER PARTY AT HIS HOME. AS MR. SMITH AND THE FOUR SOVIET CITIZENS APPROACHED THE BUILDING, THE UNKNOWN PERSONS GOT OUT OF A CAR WHICH WAS PARKED NEAR THE BUILDING AND BEGAN TAKING FLASH PHOTOGRAPHS OF MR. SMITH AND HIS GUESTS. AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE BUILDING, THREE UNIFORMED MILITIA MEN STOPPED MR. SMITH'S GUESTS AND ASKED FOR THEIR DOCUMENTS. DESPITE MR. SMITH'S STATEMENT THAT THE FOUR SOVIET CITIZENS WERE HIS GUESTS, THE MILITIA CONTINUED TO REFUSE TO LET THEM ENTER. THE MILITIA STATED THAT THEY WERE CHECKING DOCUMENTS BECAUSE "FOREIGNERS" LIVING IN THE BUILDING HAD COMPLAINED THAT SOVIET GUESTS HAD STOLEN THINGS FROM THEIR HOMES. MR. SMITH STATED THAT HE WISHED HIS SOVIET GUESTS TO ENTER AND ASKED WHETHER THE MILITIA INTENDED TO REFUSE TO PERMIT AN AMERICAN DIPLOMAT TO HAVE SOVIET CITIZENS AS GUESTS. THE MILITIA CONTINUED TO BLOCK ENTRY TO THE BUILDING
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FOR SEVERAL MORE MINUTES, DURING WHICH THE PHOTOGRAPHERS CONTINUED TO CIRCLE AROUND THE GROUP TAKING FLASH PHOTOGRAPHS. AT ABOUT 11:30 PM, WHEN MR. SMITH ESCORTED HIS GUESTS BACK OUT OF THE BUILDING, THE TWO PHOTOGRAPHERS WERE STILL THERE AND AGAIN TOOK FLASH PHOTOGRAPHS OF THEM.

THE EMBASSY HAS PREVIOUSLY INDICATED TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY THAT IT CONSIDERS SOCIAL CONTACTS BETWEEN AMERICAN DIPLOMATS AND SOVIET CITIZENS PART OF THE NORMAL DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY OF THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY IN THE SOVIET UNION, AS SUCH CONTACTS WITH CITIZENS OF THE HOST COUNTRY ARE NORMAL IN VIRTUALLY ALL COUNTRIES WITH WHICH THE UNITED STATES HAS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. THE BEHAVIOR OF THE SOVIET MILITIA AND PHOTOGRAPHERS TOWARD MR. SMITH AND HIS GUESTS ON JANUARY 11 CONSTITUTED PURE AND SIMPLE HARASSMENT, WHICH NO TRANSPARENT FABRICATIONS ABOUT ALLEGED THEFTS CAN HIDE. THE EMBASSY CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES WHO ARRANGED THIS HARASSMENT WISH TO INHIBIT NORMAL CONTACTS BETWEEN AMERICAN DIPLOMATS AND SOVIET CITIZENS.

THE EMBASSY PROTESTS THESE ACTIONS AND REQUESTS
THE MINISTRY TO ENSURE THAT SUCH HARASSMENT OF
EMBASSY OFFICERS NOT BE REPEATED. END TEXT.
MATLOCK

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